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December 8, 1971

Mr. G. H. Rieman  
W. Clement & Jessie V. Stone Foundation  
Suite 2720  
Prudential Plaza  
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Dear Mr. Rieman,

Thank you for your letter of December 1st and for the second run of material on your foundation and the application from the Darwin Research Station.

The Galapagos are well known as a unique ecological habitat of great interest to those concerned with the conservation of endangered species as well as for its historical importance in Darwin's studies. The application has a good measure of face validity but I had no personal experience of that area and therefore called upon one of my colleagues.

Professor Donald P. Abbott (Professor of Biology and Associate Director of The Hopkins Marine Station of Stanford University, Pacific Grove, California) tells me that he is well acquainted with their work, that it is one of the few significant efforts at biological field investigation going on on the islands, that its staff is dedicated and trust-worthy, and that their work definitely deserves support. Since they are applying to you for a relatively modest amount of seed money in order to develop a more reliable base of philanthropic support, I can well imagine that your contribution would have considerable leverage towards the survival of their operation in a way consistent with the stated overall objectives of the foundation.

The long-range feature of the Galapagos is, of course, primarily the responsibility of the government of Ecuador. One of the most compelling justifications for the work of the foundation is that there is no other group competent and capable of providing the necessary advice to that government for planning the future development of the islands in ways that will be of the most mutual benefit, in the long run, both to the citizens of Ecuador and to the global interest in the conservation of vanishing species. Dr. Abbott tells me that he would be glad to respond to your inquiries in further detail if desirable for you to reach a judgment. I can only add that I have the greatest confidence in his own, that is Dr. Abbott's judgment on a question of this kind.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics

JL/rr